795 182 Despite its centuries in Ghegnia, Catholicism has failed to change many of the customs of the mountaineers, such as the *fis* system with cross-cousin marriage, trial marriage, the levirate, blood brotherhood, and the swearing of virginity. The reason is of course that the needs which these customs fill have not been eliminated. The Moslem faith permits them and thus has become more popular. Islam is deemed the more fashionable and more civilized religion. The people of the towns, rich men, army officers, and other sophisticates are usually Moslems. Most Catholics are poor. This attitude is of course a hold-over from the period of Turkish domination. Many Albanians [191] admired the Turks. Many spoke Turkish by preference. I recall once riding along a lane in Zadrima with my interpreter, Mr. Frasheri, who reprimanded 2 old harvesters whom we passed for talking Turkish together. Bishop Fan Noli suggests that they may have been Turkish-speaking refugees from the towns of Prizren, Peia, or Podgoritza.

795 262 273 There is a certain dietary difference between Catholics and Moslems. The former eat pork, especially in the wintertime. The Moslems curl up their nostrils and gag at the smell of pork, and will not enter a room where it is cooking. In its place they use much mutton fat in their cooking. Catholics drink wine when they can get it; Moslems care for their alcoholic needs with *raki*. These differences are probably of no biological importance, as far as the growth and development of the individual are concerned, but they do serve to intensify the mutual antipathy of the 2 religious groups and inhibit a genetic interchange.

582 178 795 In Lura, in a population not exceeding a few hundred individuals, Catholics and Moslems intermarry. In a single household the father may be Catholic, the mother Moslem, and the children will choose their own religions. This is the only place in Ghegnia where this happens. Lura is in process of change from Catholicism to Islam. As the latter gains ground, mixed households are found. The government of Ahmed Zog made much of this isolated situation, urging other Albanians to follow the example of the Lurans in the interests of national unity.

178 795 Various stages in this process of shifting are found in different tribes and *bairaks*. In Mer-

elders. Even if they are persuaded to swear on the cross, they will not forego the stone, which is the symbol which gives their oath validity. They are also great believers in omens, and in divination. Men versed in this skill read the future by observing the sternal bones of fowl and the scapulae of sheep. I have witnessed a performance of the latter. The bone has its special divisions, each of which has meaning. On the sheep's scapula the joint socket is the house, and its depth or shallowness indicates whether the house will be empty or full of wealth. This can be used to predict success or failure of crops. The ridge on the blade shows whether or not flocks will multiply. Small holes on the blade are cradles, and the diviner can tell how close to the family, i.e., the "house," the birth will be by the distance from the socket. When you hold the blade up to the firelight or lamp, the shape and position of the marrow will tell where and when there will be fighting. Opaque white spots mean death, and their position indicates whether they will be within or without the household of the enquirer.

All of these rituals are concerned with the maintenance of equilibrium in Gheg society. Oaths give authority to agreements, and cannot be broken until a crisis arrives which is stronger than that which the oath-breaking will produce. By clever use of the divining bones, a knowledgeable man can evaluate the state of affairs in his neighborhood, and give warnings; he can also precipitate decisions from wavering allies, for if he is a diviner of reputation, his words will be believed. Very often what he predicts will come true.

Special ritual routines common to members of both official religions restore equilibrium after the crises of birth, marriage, and death. All of these rituals which reinforce their social habits are of much greater importance to the Ghegs than the rites of church or mosque, which are not as well adjusted to this particular form of society. Another such mechanism is traditional law, codified and memorized as the Law of Lek Dukagin, which expresses the mountain attitude toward marriage and the selection of wives, and toward the blood feud. It serves to crystallize forms of behavior and inhibit change in those who are trained from childhood to believe in its infallible authority.

[See ctt 116, pp. 37a-b-And 45t]

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Still another mechanism[1] is that of art, expressed chiefly in singing to the *oud*, or *gusle*, as it is more familiarly known to outsiders. Singing hour after hour to the accompaniment of this one-stringed instrument, and sometimes throughout the night, warriors recount the deeds of their ancestors, and even of their contemporaries. By using traditional verse forms and a stereotyped vocabulary they can compose new epics as they sing, and recite old ones verbatim. Like illiterate bards elsewhere, they have prodigious memories. *Gusle*-singing stirs the mountaineer to action as surely as bagpipe music fires the Highland Scot, thus rousing men to heroic deeds for which they may later pay dearly. It is a part of the whole com-

1 [for maintaining equilibrium in Gheg society -- Analyst]

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533 plex of feuding, like that other and minor art form, the embroidered and crocheted decorations on the mountaineer's clothing by which he announces defiantly from the limit of eyesight his exact familial and political affiliation.

All of these cultural mechanisms belong to Moslems and Catholics without distinction.[1] They make up by far the greater part of the emotional life of the people, and it is no wonder that Albanians say that they are not "religious." These customs are psychological means of reinforcing the habits of behavior by which the mountain people maintain their adjustment to their environment, and as such are pertinent to our present study.

[1] [see cat. 116, pp. 37a-38b -- Analyst]